

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 01419 311707Z
ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6951

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1419

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SU, US
SUBJECT: AIR DEFENSE PACKAGE FOR SUDAN

REF: STATE 79689

1. EMBASSY APPRECIATES STATUS REPORT CONTAINED REFTEL.
IF OUTLOOK IS AS DESCRIBED PARA ONE WE ASSUME WE SHOULD
TENTATIVELY PLAN TO HAVE TEAM HERE TO NEGOTIATE LOA BY
MID-MAY.
2. WE SHARE DEPARTMENT'S TENTATIVE CONCLUSION THAT TIME
REQUIRED TO TRAIN MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONAL PERSONNEL
AND OTHER FACTORS WILL LIKELY RESULT IN SUDAN AIR FORCE
NOT REPEAT NOT BEING FULLY READY TO ACCEPT AND OPERATE
F-5S FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS. HOWEVER WE ANTICIPATE SUDANESE
ARGUING THAT THEY HAVE SUFFICIENT MIG 21 QUALIFIED PILOTS
AS WELL AS OPERATIONAL AIR BASE AT WADI SAIDNA. THERE-
FORE, THEY WILL CLAIM THEY ARE RELATIVELY MORE PREPARED
FOR F-5S THAN THEY WERE FOR C-130S AND THAT THEY COULD
ACCEPT ACCELERATED DELIVERY.
3. REGARDING PARA 3 REFTEL IT MAY BE TRUE THAT WE
HAVE NOT YET HAD SPECIFIC REQUEST TO EXPEDITE ARRIVAL OF
AIRCRAFT. NEVERTHELESS SUDANESE MILITARY HAVE MADE
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IT CLEAR INFORMALLY THAT THEY WISH MOST EXPEDITIOUS
DELIVERY POSSIBLE. SUDANESE BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE A
SERIOUS THREAT IN EAST FOR WHICH THEY WILL BE COMPLETELY
UNPREPARED, IN TERMS OF AIR DEFENSE, UNTIL F-5S ARE PART
OF THEIR INVENTORY. MOREOVER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN
HORN AND ANTICIPATED INTENSIFICATION OF ERITREAN WAR
WITH SOVIET AND CUBAN PARTICIPATION MAKES THREAT EVEN

MORE SERIOUS AND NEED FOR FS-5S EVEN MORE URGENT FROM
SUDANESE POINT OF VIEW.

4. SUDANESE ARGUMENTS REGARDING MIG-21 PILOTS, AVAIL-
ABILITY OF AIR BASE AND URGENCY OF THREAT ARE NOT REPEAT
NOT FRIVOLOUS, EVEN IF COUNTER-ARGUMENTS CAN BE MADE.
FOR EXAMPLE, MIG-21 PILOTS HAVE HAD VERY LITTLE ACTUAL
FLYING TIME AND THEREFORE ARE STALE. ON OTHER HAND WE
REALIZE THAT IT PROBABLY WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ADVANCE
DELIVERIES OF F-5S AS MUCH AS WAS DONE WITH C-130S
I WOULD HOPE HOWEVER THAT IF EVEN ONLY A FEW MONTHS COULD
BE SHAVED FROM SCHEDULED DELIVERIES WE WOULD BE PREPARED
TO DO SO. QUITE APART FROM PURELY MILITARY
CONSIDERATIONS SUCH A MOVE WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL TO
US HERE POLITICALLY AND WOULD NOT GO UNNOTICED IN REGION
GENERALLY AT A TIME WHEN CONCERN IS GROWING OVER SOVIET/
CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN THE HORN AND OUR FRIENDS ARE LOOKING
FOR SIGNS OF SUPPORT FROM U.S.

5. I BELIEVE REFTTEL IS OVER-CLASSIFIED. MAY WE DOWNGRADE
THIS TELEGRAM AND REFTTEL TO LIMDIS?
BERGUS

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Message Attributes

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